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OF THE

DELEGATION TO THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
NINETY-SEVENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

MAY 28, 1982

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COMPLETED

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE DELEGATION VISIT TO THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

Ninety-Seventh Congress, Second Session

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U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, D.C., May 28, 1982.

Hon. MELVIN PRICE,
Chairman, House Committee on Armed Services,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: At your direction as chairman, I headed a delegation of eight members of the committee on an inspection visit to the Middle East and Africa to obtain firsthand information on matters bearing on national security. The delegation visited the Azores, Morocco, Egypt, Israel, Oman, Kenya, Mauritius and South Africa. The period of the visits extended from April 6 to April 19, 1982. I am hereby submitting as an enclosure to this letter a report of the delegation's findings and observations on this trip.

In my view, the delegation was most fortunate in having the opportunity to observe activities in these nations bearing so significantly on our national security and world peace and to discuss substantive matters with leaders of these nations. In light of the current importance of activities in these areas, the information the committee delegation obtained should be very helpful to the committee.

In addition to the enclosed committee delegation report I am also enclosing a report by the Honorable Eldon Rudd of the Appropriations Committee who accompanied us on this trip. His report covers his separate visit to Israeli industrial facilities.

I want to thank you again for the honor of heading up the committee delegation on this mission.

Sincerely,

RICHARD C. WHITE.

Enclosure.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Iranian revolution, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, continued Soviet adventurism through its surrogates Libya and Cuba, and the war between Iran and Iraq have brought even more urgency to the problem of maintaining a viable political-military balance in the Middle East and Africa.

In response to this growing strategic challenge, particularly in the Persian Gulf area, the United States has created the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (RDJTF). Designed to provide a rapid response capability for the protection of U.S. interests, the RDJTF depends heavily upon U.S. access to facilities in the region.

With a programmed facilities budget of over $1 billion through fiscal year 1983, the RDJTF represents a major investment on the part of the United States in the Middle East and Africa. As a major U.S. national security initiative, the RDJTF concept is dependent upon a number of critical factors, including: (1) ability to deploy and project forces rapidly; (2) obtaining access to logistical support facilities; and (3) pre-positioning critical supplies.

The ability to achieve these objectives is measured most realistically within the political context in which U.S. security interests must function. In particular, the United States does not have permanent bases in the region nor is its visible military presence desired. Rather, the United States has adopted an over-the-horizon posture that emphasizes the ability to move great distances very rapidly. Clearly, this strategy has significant implications for the United States in terms of the types and costs of defense resources that are allocated for the program.

Itinerary

In view of the large-scale investment requested for the RDJTF, the Committee on Armed Services felt that an assessment should be made of this expanding national security commitment. A committee delegation, therefore, was dispatched over the April 6 to 20, 1982, period to visit Lajes, Portugal; Morocco; Egypt; Israel; Oman; Kenya; Mauritius; and South Africa. It was assigned the primary responsibility of reviewing the status of the facilities access program and the impact of the overall geo-political framework on the RDJTF's ability to carry out its mission.

During this period, the last stages of the Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai was occurring and the United States' participation in the Multi-National Force and Observors (MFO) was unfolding. Therefore, the delegation's agenda included these items as well.

On site inspections and discussions were scheduled with as many as possible of the top political and military leaders in the various countries on the delegation's itinerary. These firsthand contacts provided valuable information for evaluating the evolution and impact

of the RDJTF, both from the U.S. perspective and from the standpoint of countries with whom U.S. security relationships are maturing.

The following list of the major officials interviewed in the countries visited indicates the extensive number of contacts made in obtaining information for this report.

Lajes, AFB, Azores, Portugal

During an enroute fueling stop, the delegation met with Brigadier General Duane H. Erickson, USAF, Commander, U.S. Forces, Azores; Brigadero Ramos Lopes, Portuguese Air Force, Commander, Lajes Field; and Dr. Reis Leite, Regional Secretary for Cultural and Educational Affairs, Government of Portugal, to review the status of United States-Portugal current base rights and facilities access negotiations, military construction and military family housing.

Morocco

Colonel Major Kabbaj, Chief, Royal Moroccan Air Force. The delegation visited two air bases that have been mentioned for possible use by the RDJTF. At the time of the visit, King Hassan II of Morocco was holding an emergency national economic summit in a city away from the locale of the delegation's visit; therefore, the delegation was unable to meet with the King.

Egypt

President Hosni Mubarak and Field Marshall Mohamed Abu Ghazala, Minister of Defense and War Production. The delegation visited Cairo West and viewed Ras Banas, two bases that have been identified for the RDJTF.

Israel

Prime Minister Menachem Begin; Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yitzhak Shamir; Minister of Defense, Ariel Sharon; and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yehuda Ben-Mier.

Sinai

The delegation visited the U.S. contingent of the 82d Airborne Division assigned to the MFO in the Sinai at Sharm el Sheikh, formerly known as Ophira during Israeli occupation of the area.

Oman

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Yusuf al-Alawi Abdullah; Brigadier Hassan Ehsannaseeb, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Defense; and General Sir Timothy Creasey, Chief of the Defense Staff. In addition, the delegation visited the Omani Air Force Base on Masirah Island.

Kenya

Commissioner Luka Galgalo, Commissioner, East Coast Province. The delegation also visited the site of U.S. naval dredging operations in Mombasa harbor.

Mauritius

Prime Minister Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, his cabinet and Governor-General Sir Dayendranath Burrenchobay.

South Africa

Incidental to the delegation review of the RDJTF program a brief logistical stop was made in South Africa. During the layover, the delegation met with Minister of Foreign Affairs and Information, R. F. Botha; Minister of Defense General Magnus Malan; and Director General, Department of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Brandt Fourie. Discussions centered on Soviet-Cuban activities in Southern Africa and South Africa's role in Namibia.

Scope of Report

The delegation's assessment of the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force is influenced by a number of factors and conditions that remain in a state of flux. Consequently, the evaluation of the RDJTF is by necessity in the form of general observations that relate to the information obtained at a particular point in time, rather than detailed critical analysis.

At the same time, the delegation believes that the report can serve as a useful information base for the committee and for all Members of Congress in considering policy and program requirements that are associated with this critical region of the world. Congress is an active participant in this country's foreign and national security policy-making process. Reports such as this one can contribute to Congress' performance of its responsibilities in this policy process.

II. LAJES FIELD, AZORES

Located 865 miles from Portugal and 950 miles from the coast of Africa in the Atlantic Ocean, Lajes Field installation is important to the mission of the Military Airlift Command. Together with the Madeira Islands and the Portuguese mainland, the Azores form a strategic triangle at the throat of the Strait of Gibraltar. The base is under the jurisdiction of the Government of Portugal and the question of its continued use by the United States is part of the negotiating package on base rights currently underway between the two governments.

The present base rights agreement expires in February 1983. To date, Portugal has agreed to military construction that is NATO related. Also, several refurnishment type projects have been approved.

At issue in the present base rights negotiation is the United States' proposed construction of Southwest Asia contingency facilities, primarily logistical support projects. A total of $131.3 million in planned construction is tied up by the negotiations. Until agreement is reached there is little prospect that construction will be permitted.

In meeting with base officials, the delegation learned that the negotiations are complicated by several factors. One problem is the fact that the United States is currently negotiating a base rights agreement with Spain. Until those discussions are completed, it is unlikely that Portugal will reach agreement with the United States on its base rights package.

A second problem involves Portuguese sensitivity to the use of facilities for military operations in Southwest Asia. A number of Portu-

guese citizens are located in Southwest Asia and represent potential political and economic hostages by virtue of their presence in potentially hostile countries.

Portuguese dependence upon Middle East oil also complicates the issue. With any threatened cutoff of this oil supply, Portugal would be subject to intense pressures that could possibly reduce United States access to facilities at Lajes.

At the same time, Portugal is seeking increased economic and military assistance from the United States. The proposed fiscal year 1983 assistance program for Portugal totals $113.6 million as compared to $78.2 million for fiscal year 1982. In particular, the Portuguese are seeking military equipment, most notably naval frigates, air defense and fighter aircraft and improved hardware for the army.

In addition to discussions about the overall political climate, the delegation reviewed the individual military and family housing construction projects. A base tour confirmed the need for improved facilities, particularly family housing. Adequate housing on the economy is virtually nonexistent. Housing conditions overall are deplorable and need to be remedied. Obviously, the present American base population of 1,600 military and 1,400 civilians is not well served by these conditions. An estimated housing deficit of 450 units currently exists at Lajes.

The Air Force recently shipped 40 units of manufactured housing to the Azores. At the time of the delegation visit, the units were waiting to be sited. Also, the Air Force is seeking land outside the base property on which to locate housing. Because the present status of forces agreement (SOFA) does not cover host nation acquisition of property, the United States is faced with the prospect of spending an estimated $325,000 for the property.

Unquestionably, the overriding factor influencing the status of Lajes is the lack of resolution in the negotiations between the United States and Portugal. Both sides need each other: Portugal needs U.S. assistance and the United States needs access to the facilities at Lajes. However, the United States can look at alternative locations, such as Morocco, for its RDJTF program.

At present, the RDJTF effort is hampered by the state of limbo with the construction program at Lajes Field. If satisfactory progress is not made in the near term, the United States should look elsewhere to locate the necessary support facilities for the RDJTF program.

III. MOROCCO

Perched on Africa's northwest shoulder, Morocco sits as the southern gatekeeper to the Strait of Gibralter leading into the Mediterranean Sea. Unrestricted shipping through this narrow ribbon of water between Morocco and Spain is vital to the commerce and security of Europe and the Middle East. It also is a key passage for the U.S. Navy's Sixth Fleet which patrols the Mediterranean as a floating strike force and counterweight to the Soviet naval presence in the region.

U.S. attention to Morocco's strategic value has increased significantly during the past year, particularly in light of a growing uncer-

tainty over the continued use by American forces of bases in Spain, Portugal and Greece.

For now, the United States has been able to insure free movement through the Strait and to maintain a sizable rapid air strike capability throughout the Mediterranean from four large air and naval bases being leased in Spain. However, the five-year treaty between Spain and the United States that provides for those bases expired in September 1981, and protracted negotiations for a new treaty between the two countries has yet to produce an agreement.

In Greece, where U.S. air and naval units operate from four bases, Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou has threatened to close the facilities to use by the United States. However, there have been hopeful signs recently that a new bilateral agreement for U.S. base rights in Greece may be achievable.

This cloud over the future of U.S. bases in Spain, Greece and the Azores has caused the United States to turn greater attention to the North African littoral in pursuit of potential access to bases.

United States-Moroccan Joint Military Commission

During is visit to Morocco, the delegation was briefed on the recent agreement between the United States and Morocco on the establishment of a joint military commission and on steps that are expected to lead to transit rights for American military forces.

The commission and the prospect for U.S. military transit rights from Moroccan bases brings the two countries closer together militarily than at any time since four U.S. Air Force bases in Morocco were unilaterally phased out by the United States in the late 1950's and early 1960's.

It is similar to commissions that have been set up with Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Egypt, and resulted, in the words of the joint statement establishing the commission, from "the growth in the United States-Moroccan military relationship to the point where a more formal structure is required to address security matters of mutual interest."

It was stressed throughout the briefings that there is no intention of stationing American forces in Morocco. Instead, the United States is seeking permission for American forces to use Moroccan air bases and naval installations only in times of emergency.

This improved military relationship between the two countries has already resulted in an increase in visits to Moroccan ports by ships of the Sixth Fleet. U.S. naval ship visits in Morocco are now averaging about one a month with as many as seven ships calling on a Moroccan port at a time. The ports open to Sixth Fleet ship visits are Casablanca and Agadir on the Atlantic and Tangiers and Al Hoceima on the Mediterranean.

Ships from the Sixth Fleet also have made two recent port calls in Algeria. Gaining access to Moroccan and Algerian ports as rest and replenishment stops is a high priority item for the U.S. Navy because it is difficult to find ports along the North African coast where U.S. combatant ships are welcome.

In talks with Morocco, the United States has indicated a desire to have transit access to possibly two of the four former U.S. air bases in Morocco. At the time of the delegation's visit, the exact number and

selection of the bases had not been finalized. The delegation did have an opportunity to overfly the Ben Guerir air base near Marrakesh and inspected on the ground the facilities at Sidi Slimane air base near Rabat.

The Moroccan Air Force officers who briefed the delegation were very open and cooperative. The delegation was particularly impressed by the excellent condition of the fuel facilities, runways, parking, taxiways and aircraft shelters at Sidi Slimane.

U.S. Military Assistance

Engaged in a six-year-old war against Polisario Front guerrillas over the Western Sahara, Morocco is concerned about Soviet-supplied weapons reaching the guerrillas from both Algeria and Libya.

Morocco's worry is further compounded because its agrarian economy has been so weakened by a drought that Morocco has not been able to pay even for the limited amount of military hardware previously offered for direct sale by the United States.

The Reagan Administration has proposed a sizable increase in U.S. military assistance of Morocco. The Administration would like to raise the $34 million in military credits available to Morocco this fiscal year to $100 million next fiscal year.

IV. EGYPT

The assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in October 1981 sent shockwaves throughout the world, especially in the United States. Under his leadership, Egypt had become a valued ally of the United States and his courage in helping to forge the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty offered the hope of lessened tensions in the Middle East.

President Sadat's untimely death obviously generated concerns that a serious political vacuum could develop in Egypt and undermine existing political stability. Therefore, the United States has had a vital interest in the succession process and in the ability of the new Egyptian leadership to maintain a viable political system.

Egypt occupies a critical geographical location in the Middle East. It controls the Suez Canal and the northern access to the Red Sea, its coastline fronts the Mediterranean Sea and it sits across from the rich oil fields of Saudi Arabia. It also has by far the largest Arab population and its historic leadership in the Arab world cannot be minimized.,

Meeting With President Mubarak

For the United States, Egypt is a key element in the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force mosaic. Access to Egyptian military facilities is part of the RDJTF strategy; therefore, continuity of U.S.-Egyptian relations is important to the success of the RDJTF. Consequently, the delegation was anxious to meet with President Hosni Mubarak and his military leaders.

Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force

In the meeting with President Hosni Mubarak, the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force was discussed extensively. President Mubarak made it clear that the United States could have access to facilities.

He cited the exchange of correspondence between President Reagan and President Sadat confirming access to needed facilities. President Mubarak indicated that there was no change in Egyptian thinking and that President Sadat's pledge remained in force.

There was no requirement for a written agreement in President Mubarak's view. If problems arose on any issue, the United States and Egypt could discuss the matter.

The question of specific facilities was discussed. President Mubarak explained that the United States could use facilities anywhere, but not for the purpose of establishing a permanent presence. The facilities could be used for limited periods. Any different use could invite reaction from the Soviet Union and from other Arab nations.

In terms of an overall assessment of the RDJTF, President Mubarak expressed concern over its capability to respond rapidly. In his view, the most likely threat to most countries in the region would be internal. Under such circumstances, it would be difficult for the United States to intervene without invitation, even if it wanted to. The United States, accordingly, should help its allies in the region become strong enough to defend themselves. Clearly, President Mubarak viewed the RDJTF as a complementary part of an overall United States effort to assist the free nations in the Middle East to develop their own capabilities.

To this point, President Mubarak emphasized the importance of expeditious delivery of U.S. military equipment already on order. In terms of specific problems, President Mubarak questioned the sharp increase in the cost of the improved Hawk Missile Battery from $40 million to $80 million. He indicated this type of rapid cost escalation without warning would not sit well with the Egyptian military and expressed hope that Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger would resolve the problem.

It was clear to the delegation that Egypt views the United States as a full partner now. In addition to helping Egypt regain the Sinai, the United States' economic and military assistance programs are essential. In response to the question about Soviet-Egyptian relations, President Mubarak noted that the return of Soviet economic experts to Egypt was in fulfillment of earlier agreements between the two countries. He said all of the advisors would be gone by the end of the year.

The peace process

With Israel's return of the Sinai to Egypt pending at the time of the delegation visit, the Egyptian-Israeli peace process was discussed during the meeting with President Mubarak.

The delegation received assurances from President Mubarak that Egypt does not intend to change her attitude or policies on the peace process after the Israeli withdrawal from Sinai. President Mubarak emphasized that April 25, 1982, the date set for Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai, in itself had no significance for Egyptian policy. He said that Egypt is not considering a change in attitude toward the peace process. He noted also that Egypt's relations with Arab states will never be changed at the expense of Egyptian relations with Israel.

The delegation inquired about what appeared to be a contradictory statement of Egyptian policy by Egyptian Ambassador to the United

Nations, Ismat Abdel-Maguid. Ambassador Maguid outlined an 11-point Egyptian peace plan during a meeting of non-aligned nations in Kuwait. The plan appeared to deviate from the Camp David agreement and the associated Palestinian autonomy negotiations, as interpreted by Israeli officials.

The Egyptian proposal, similar to a proposal made by Saudi Arabia, offers Israel a promise of recognition by Arab states of its right to live within secure borders in exchange for eventual establishment of a Palestinian state in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza strip. The proposal has the appearance that Egypt has significantly toughened its stand on the Palestinian issue. Quized about Ambassador Maguid's remarks, President Mubarak asked rhetorically, "What new was mentioned in Kuwait?" He said that Maguid had called for mutual recognition between the Israelis and the Palestinians. This, he added, was nothing new.

Egyptian view of the Iranian-Iraqi war

The delegation was impressed by the interest of President Mubarak and Prime Minister Begin over developments in the Iranian-Iraqi War. The situation has dangerous implications.

President Mubarak pointed out that if Iraq is defeated, the whole middle eastern area. and especially Saudi Arabia and the gulf states might be gravely affected. He felt that U.S. interests clearly leaned toward helping Iraq, at least to ensure that there is no winner or loser in the present conflict.

The consequences of defeat by Iran has the potential for collapse of the Iraqi government, which might lead to the overthrow of President Sadam Hussein. A politically unstable Iraq might be vulnerable to outside influences, particularly Iranian attempts to incite the large Shiite population in Iraq to make its own Islamic revolution.

Additionally, an Iranian victory could pose some special problems for the United States and the Soviet Union. It was indicated that an Iranian victory might threaten efforts by the United States for accommodations with the Iranians in order to help stabilize activities in the strategically important gulf area. The Soviet Union, which has given aid to Iran, might find that an Iranian victory would also encourage Islamic revivalism in Afghanistan and Syria, both in the Soviet sphere of influence.

MEETING WITH DEFENSE MINISTER MOHAMED ABU GHAZALA

A follow-on meeting with Defense Minister Field Marshall Mohamed Abu Ghazala detailed the military threat facing Egypt. In particular, Marshall Ghazala reviewed the extensive buildup of modern equipment by the Soviet Union's surrogates in the region. Compared to Egypt's military force, he viewed these growing inventories as serious military challenges and stressed the importance of his country obtaining modern equipment.

In response to questions about the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force, the Defense Minister raised three points:

(1) The United States should change the name of the RDJTF to something like the "support deployment force." In his view, the term "Rapid Deployment Force" conveys unacceptable political

connotations. He suggested that the term "support" means help for friends.

(2) Equipment and material should be predeployed and prepositioned. Reliance on airlift doing the job is questionable.

(3) Egypt is prepared to offer access to facilities to the United States. In fact, Ras Banas is ready.

Marshall Ghazala indicated that Egypt preferred the United States to use Ras Bansas, an Egyptian air base built in the 1960's under the supervision of the Soviets, approximately 400 miles south of Cairo on the Red Sea coastline. According to Marshall Ghazala, the United States could use Cairo West, an Egyptian air base located 20 miles west of Cairo on the way to Alexandria. However, it would be used to complement Ras Banas, not as an alternative.

The port of Alexandria and the city's international airport were also discussed. Minister Ghazala pointed out that the United States could use the port, but that it was very crowded. The airport is a civilian facility and its use could present problems.

As to the RDJTF, the Defense Minister did not view its role as one of responding to internal conflicts in various countries. Rather, the RDJTF could only be used against an external force with the permission of the host government. Without such permission, intervention as assistance would be unacceptable.

Visits to Cairo West and Ras Banas

In conjunction with the meetings with President Mubarak and Defense Minister Ghazala, the delegation visited Cairo West and Ras Banas, two installations that offer potential facilities for the RDF.

Cairo West

Cairo West is a large complex on the outskirts of Cario that is used by the Egyptian Air Force. The United States has had F–4 training personnel located at the base. It has been used also for RDJTF training exercises. Its greatest drawback is the lack of an adequate power supply and the absence of any petroleum storage facilities.

The facilities at Cairo West are austere by U.S. standards. However, their use by the RDJTF would be on a contingency basis; therefore, it does not appear that extensive construction would be required.

The base could be used to supplement the Ras Banas installation. It would permit dispersal of assets, thus reducing congestion and overcrowding at Ras Banas. Its proximity to Cario and its distance from the oil fields of Saudi Arabia lessen its attractiveness as an alternative to Ras Banas.

Ras Banas

In its present condition, the value of the base at Ras Banas is minimal. It requires extensive upgrading. To date, $300 million has been requested, planning and design funds have been approved, and authorization of $106.4 million for construction was approved in fiscal year 1982. However, the Congress has not appropriated construction funds for work at Ras Banas.

Its location appears to be suitable for its function. It is in a relatively isolated part of Egypt, it offers both air and sea links, and it is

of sufficient size to accommodate a contingency build up. Also, Ras Banas is located in a more protected area as far as potential hostile air attack is concerned.

Based upon the extensive reviews by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the political constraints facing the United States, Ras Banas appears to be a feasible site for the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force to obtain access to facilities in Egypt. At the same time, its attractiveness is reduced by the substantial costs associated with its development.

For the delegation, the question of Ras Banas involved whether or not the RDJTF can function effectively with or without it. Unless circumstances change significantly in the near term, it does not appear that an alternative will be available to the United States.

V. ISRAEL

The delegation arrived in Jerusalem on Easter Sunday, April 11, 1982. On that day, an off-duty Israeli soldier opened fire on a group of persons in the old city of Jerusalem, killing some and wounding others.

The delegation had an opportunity to experience first-hand the tension that can erupt on very short order in that area of the world. Within minutes of the shooting incident, reports of retaliatory action by some Arab groups were widespread. Acts of violence continued throughout the day. The Israelis proclaimed that the soldier had gone beserk and that the Israelis should not be held accountable for his actions. Some of the Arab population were led to believe that the Israelis had deliberately planned to desecrate the Al Aqsa Mosque, sacred to the Moslim world. Such were the circumstances that reminded the delegation that tensions can run high in that part of the world, and incidents of various kinds can escalate into major confrontations.

The delegation was briefed by American Ambassador to Israel, Samuel L. Lewis, who reminisced about the Israeli psyche since 1977, when President Sadat visited Jerusalem. He likened it to a new hope, rising from despair, that a peaceful relationship analogous to the American-Canadian relationship, could exist between Egypt and Israel. Since then, over 50,000 Israeli tourists have visited Egypt, and there have been cultural exchanges between the two countries on many subjects. The return of the Sinai was a disillusionment for many Israelis because they considered the Sinai a new frontier, a safety valve for Israeli southern and western borders.

Important topics discussed with Ambassador Lewis included American efforts toward cease fire agreements on the Lebanon/Israeli border, the Camp David accords, administration of the West Bank and Gaza territories, foreign military sales to Israel, Egypt and Saudi Arabia and Arab-Israeli-United States relations.

Meeting With Prime Minister Begin

In his April 12 meeting with the delegation, Prime Minister Menachem Begin was positive in his comments concerning the Israeli commitment to withdraw from the Sinai on April 25, 1982. He considered the peace process of great significance and a revolutionary change in the politics of the Middle East following 30 years of war.

Peace process

Mr. Begin noted that in Israel there was a perception among some that Egypt was wavering in the peace treaty commitments. He too, as did President Mubarak, gave April 25 no special significance in the peace process. The Prime Minister noted that he would like an agreement on the autonomy issue raised in the Camp David accords, but that he agreed with President Mubarak that an autonomy agreement was not necessary before the April 25 date. Prime Minister Begin emphasized that Israel would abide by the Camp David accords.

Israeli view of Iranian-Iraqi war

Prime Minister Begin characterized the war between Iraq and Iran as "a great tragedy" for both countries and "a danger to the region." In Mr. Begin's view, the conflict is worrisome because it could afford the Soviet Union an opportunity to extend its influence. The Prime Minister reasoned that should be the Ayatollah Khomeini pass on, there was a strong possibility that the Communist Tudeh party, which he termed "the best organized group in Iran," could rise to power. Should this occur it would place heightened pressure on the United States to establish a more permanent presence in the Middle East.

Mr. Begin had harsh words for the Palestine Liberation Organization which he termed agents of the Soviet bloc. He could not reconcile relationships with the P.L.O. whose platform calls for the annihilation of Israel.

The Prime Minister placed great importance on the stationing of a small unit of U.S. Army personnel in the Sinai as part of the multinational force. He views the presence of U.S. personnel as a stabilizing force in the Middle East area where events that influence world opinion occur quickly.

The Prime Minister was particularly sensitive to what he termed as untruthful articles in the U.S. press and television media with respect to allegations that Israel was responding too harshly, too often and too fast to confrontation situations with its neighbors. He noted that acts of terrorism against Israeli citizens were not receiving the same degree of recognition as attacks carried out by the Israelis.

Meeting With Foreign Minister Shamir

Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir discussed the remarks made by Egyptian Ambassador Maguid in Kuwait, stating that in his view the statement was clearly contradictory to the Camp David accords. Specifically he noted that the provisions in the accords for Palestinian autonomy were not mentioned and that there was much talk of the need for a Palestinian State and for Palestinian self-determination but in terms not contained in the Camp David accords.

Minister Shamir characterized the Sinai withdrawal as a sacrifice for peace. He said that Israel wants to be certain that a real peace will ensue. He foresees the period after April 26 as providing the real test of normalization of relations between Egypt and Israel.

Minister Shamir discussed limitations of military weapons in the Middle East area. He would rather see curtailment of the arms flow and emphasis on economic and social assistance.

Meeting With Minister of Defense Sharon

Defense Minister Ariel Sharon centered his briefing on "three circles of security problems."

The first relates to Arab terrorism, which he termed a continuous threat since well before the establishment of the Jewish State.

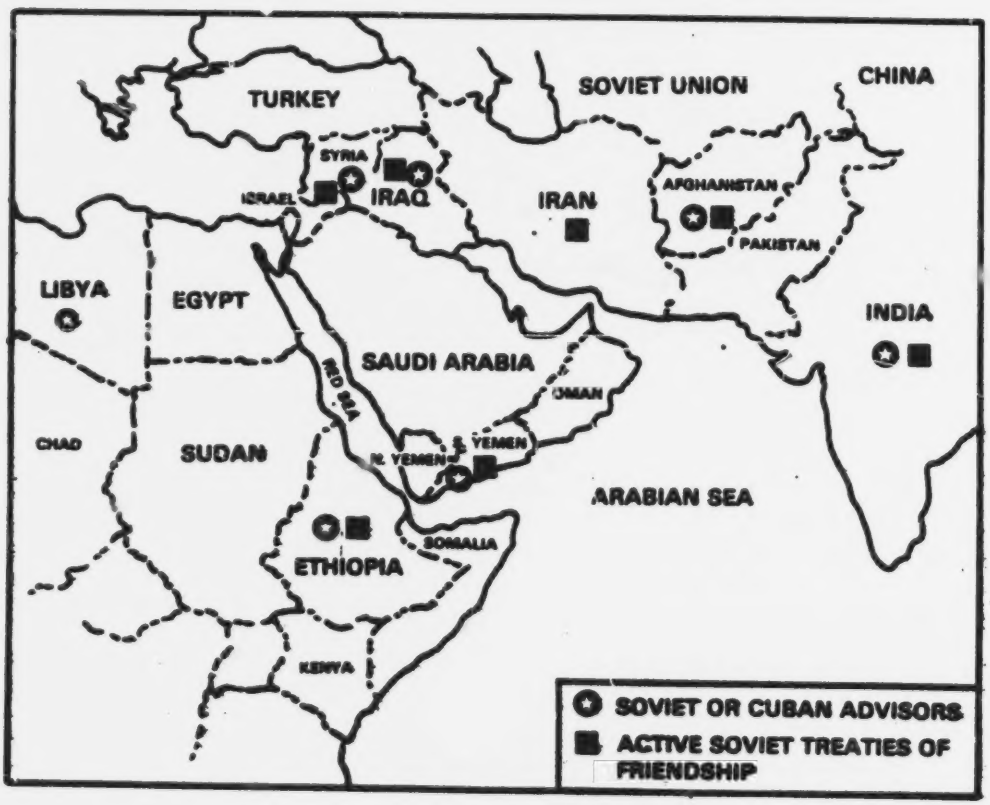
The second relates to collaboration of Arab states in the Middle East. He noted that the gap between Israeli and Arab war-making capability is inevitably closing, and as the Arab states receive increasingly sophisticated weapons, Israel has no choice but to strive constantly to upgrade its systems.

The third major security challenge relates to the Soviet threat.

He said that it was clear to him that the Soviets had designs on "the energy treasure house" of the Persian Gulf, and the "mineral treasure house of central and southern Africa." He cited Soviet activities in Afghanistan and South Yemen as well as Libya, Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

Minister Sharon commented on the U.S. plans for the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force. He essentially observed that the force, in order to be effective, would indeed have to be able to act rapidly in a timeframe bordering on days, not weeks.

MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTHWEST ASIA



AS OF 1 JANUARY 1982

Multinational Force and Observers

At the time of the delegation's visit, Israel was preparing to leave the Sinai Peninsula on April 25, 1982, amid deep anxiety and doubt about the wisdom of retreating from territory after it had fought four bitter wars with Egypt.

Shortly after the delegation's departure, the last third of the 23,442 square mile peninsula, which the Israeli Army captured in the 1967 six-day war and then held in bloody fighting in 1973, was turned over to Egypt.

For Israel, the final withdrawal was occurring while the nation watched in anguish the televised spectacle of Israeli soldiers and militant Jewish settlers fighting one another as bulldozers razed entire communities.

For both Egypt and Israel, the transfer coincided with a period of severely strained relations over border demarcation disputes. In addition, Israel charged that Egypt had already violated the 1979 peace treaty by deploying troops in demilitarized zones and by hostile statements made by its leaders. While the delegation was in the Middle East, U.S. diplomatic efforts were being conducted to mediate the disputes to prevent any delay in the transfer.

It was in this setting that the delegation visited the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) base camp at Sharm el Sheik, formerly Ophira, located at the southeastern tip of the Sinai Peninsula on the Red Sea.

The delegation was met on arrival by Lt. Col. William Garrison, Commander of the American contingent recently assigned to the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO). The U.S. troops arrived in southeastern Sinai on March 17, 1982 and reported to MFO Commander, Lt. General Frederick Bull-Hansen of Norway. The troops will be restricted to patrolling and observing the Sinai.

During briefings conducted by Lt. Col. Garrison, the delegation learned that a total of 2,633 troops from 10 contributing nations are expected to be deployed in the Sinai to make up the total complement of the MFO. The United States is providing nearly 1200 soldiers, including 800 paratroopers from the 82d Airborne Division, a helicopter unit, a 300 member supply team, and 30 civilian observers, or about half the manpower for the 10-nation force. Contingent strengths of the MFO are:

Australia	109
Colombia	502
Fiji	500
France	37
Italy	86
Netherlands	106
New Zealand	35
Norway	4
United Kingdom	37
United States	1142
Uruguay	75
Total	2633

Unlike previous peace-keeping groups in the Middle East, the MFO was not set up by the United Nations. The United States persuaded the participating nations to join individually because Soviet, Arab,

and Third World opposition to the Camp David accords prevented the world body from playing a role.

Mission of Multinational Force and Observers

The Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty, signed at the White House on March 16, 1979, directs that troops in the force will supervise the implementation of the Treaty and employ their best efforts to prevent any violation of its terms.

The multinational peacekeeping forces are located at two base camps. In addition to the contingent stationed at Sharm el Sheik/Ophira in the southeastern Sinai, MFO headquarters and a 300-member logistical support unit are stationed at El Gorah, formerly Eitam, in the northeastern Sinai near the Mediterranean. The MFO will patrol and observe Zone C which runs the length of the international border established by the Camp David accords.

Specific arrangements set forth in the Treaty Annex are: operation of checkpoints, reconnaissance patrol, and observation posts along the international boundary between Egypt and Israel, and at various points in the Sinai; periodic verification of the implementation of the provisions of the Annex; additional verification activities at the request of either Egypt or Israel; and arrangements insuring the freedom of navigation through the Strait of Tiran. The troops will not engage in combat or take any action to correct violations—only to report them to both sides. Force would only be used in self-defense or to insure that the MFO is able to carry out its mission.

The delegation toured support facilities now under construction at the base camp at Sharm el Sheik/Ophira. On-site inspection and briefings revealed that construction was started in November 1981, and is now approximately 50 percent complete. The U.S. share of the total construction costs for fiscal year 1982 is $60 million, including $24 million for the south Sinai base. The United States assumed 60 percent of the first year start-up cost with Egypt and Israel dividing the remainder equally. In future years, the United States, Egypt, and Israel will each share one-third of the annual cost of maintaining the MFO. The cost for fiscal year 1983 is estimated to be $35 million for each of the three countries.

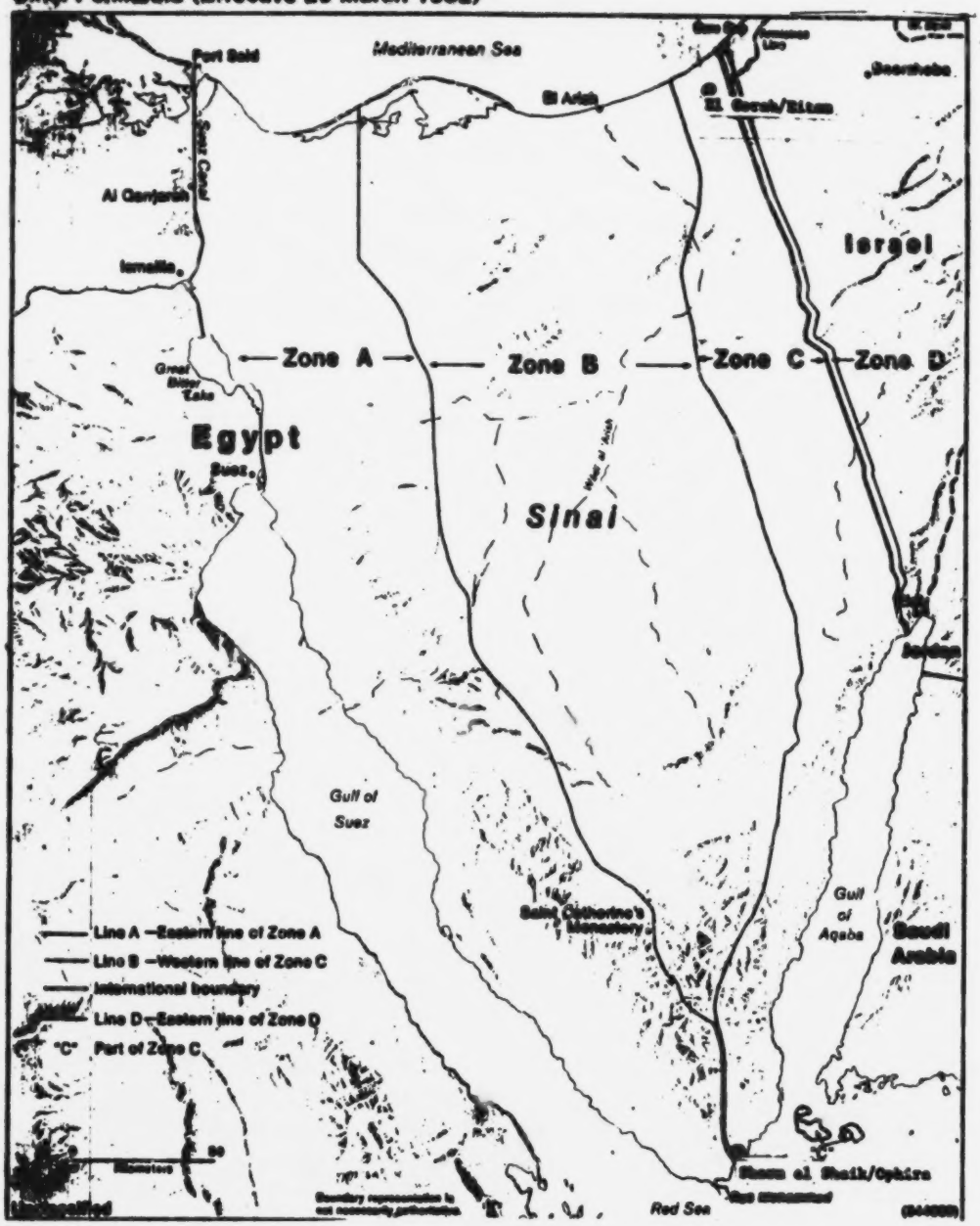
Morale problems identified

Following the briefings, members of the delegation had an opportunity to meet with U.S. personnel serving with the MFO. In the course of these meetings, a number of problem areas were identified. These included slow mail service and the fact that no packages may be sent or received by the troops; MFO policy that members may not go on leave in Israel pending resolution of the privileges and immunities question; pay inequities between the U.S. contingent and other contingents which draw per diem during their tour of duty in the Sinai; and the high price of some post exchange and commissary items such as soft drinks, for example, which were said to cost $1.50 per can.

The members of the delegation were deeply concerned by these reports and assurances were given that every effort would be made to find solutions to the problems.

The members of the delegation were happy and proud to find that in spite of the problems the morale was high, and that these young Americans, who are volunteers, are dedicated to serving in this isolated location for the cause of peace.

International Boundary and the Lines and Zones in the Sinai Peninsula (Effective 26 March 1982)



VI. OMAN

Oman is one of the United States' steadfast friends in the Persian Gulf region. One of the few nations in the Moslem world to support the Israeli-Egyptian peace accords, Oman has agreed that the United States could obtain access to its military facilities for the RDJTF.

As gatekeeper to the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow strait through which much of the oil destined for the free world must pass, Oman occupies one of the most strategic locations in the world. Its importance to Western Europe and Japan, in particular, cannot be overstated.

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By virtue of its location on the Arabian peninsula, Oman is viewed as an important link in the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force network.

Meeting With Minister of State for Foreign Affairs

The meeting with Foreign Minister Yusuf Al-Alawi was one of the highlights of the delegation's trip. His review of bilateral relations between the United States and Oman, the impact of the war between Iraq and Iran on the Gulf states, and the military threats facing Oman was incisive and put into perspective the role of the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force as envisioned by his country.

Essentially, relations between the United States and Oman are good. However, Oman feels that the United States should expand its assistance program, particularly considering Soviet Union activity in the area. In this regard, South Yemen is clearly seen as a surrogate of the Soviet Union that has benefited from massive Soviets armaments aid. The Oman government is confident, nonetheless, that it can handle the military challenge represented by South Yemen.

The Palestinian issue must be settled, the foreign minister stressed. If it is, according to Minister Al-Alawi, there would be little or no requirement for any Arab nation to seek Soviet assistance. Until the issue is resolved the United States will be confronted with hostility by Arab states, especially those whose borders are close to Israel.

There is no question that the war between Iran and Iraq is unsettling to Oman and the other Gulf states. In fact, if Iran appears to be headed toward a decisive victory, it is possible that some other Arab states would enter the war, thus raising the possibility of enlarging the conflict. For the Gulf states, which recently formed the Gulf Cooperation Council (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates) to promote economic and military security, the war represents an immediate and urgent problem.

Aside from direct confrontation with South Yemen and a spill over from the Iraqi-Iranian war, the most significant threat perceived by Oman is subversion. The Islamic revolution, epitomized by the Iranian experience, represents an opportunity for exploitation by some nations that harbor leadership ambitions in the Arab world. Libya, South Yemen and Iran are viewed with considerable suspicion and apprehension.

Meeting With Chief of the Defense Staff

Following the discussions with Minister Al-Alawi, the delegation met with General Sir Timothy Creasey, Chief of the Defense Staff, who is seconded to the Government of Oman from the British Army. General Creasey outlined the Omani military posture and what he perceives as the role of the U.S. military forces in the region. Because of the classified nature of the discussions about the Omani military, much of the detail cannot be discussed. Generally speaking, however, Omani military forces are structured to meet two types of threats: border disputes and subversion. Their capability of meeting these threats appeared to be satisfactory; nonetheless, General Creasey indicated that Oman looks to the United States to meet any general threat from the Soviet Union.

Specifically, the United States would be expected to guarantee Omani air space and freedom of the seas. In General Creasey's view, this is where the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force would serve its most useful role. It would be part of an overall deterrent that would be designed to meet a more generalized threat.

Oman figures significantly in RDJTF planning. U.S. access to Oman facilities would be the operational mode rather than establishment of a permanent U.S. presence. Currently, four locations in Oman are being considered for access possibilities for the RDJTF. To date, $224.4 million has been requested in related military construction.

Negotiations are being conducted on certain aspects of the access agreement that has been signed between the United States and Oman. Once the details are worked out, scheduled construction should begin at the one location where work has been deferred temporarily, pending completion of the negotiations.

Visit to Masirah Island

As part of the visit to Oman, the delegation met with Omani military officials at Masirah Island, located 15 miles off the mainland approximately 200 miles south of Muscat.

The delegation was briefed by the Omani military on the development of the base at Masirah. Also, the overall RDJTF program in Oman was reviewed. It was learned that the planned development program may require modification in order to improve the operational effectiveness of the RDJTF. The Omani recommendations have been submitted to the Department of Defense for review.

Based upon the information provided to the delegation the recommendations should be given serious consideration. There appears to be several shortcomings that need to be addressed by the U.S. military. A copy of the Omani critique is included in the classified annex of the report.

VII. MOMBASA, KENYA

The port of Mombasa is the largest and best in East Africa handling approximately 65 percent of all waterborne trade in that region. Mombasa is a focal point of commercial activity for other East African nations. The port is linked by rail and road along major trail routes from Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and southern Sudan. Other countries such as Zaire, Zambia, Ethiopia and Somalia use Mombasa facilities on a lesser scale. The economic development of some of these countries is significantly related to the future capabilities of the port of Mombasa.

Since 1977, the port has been operated by the Kenya Ports Authority (KPA), chartered by the government. Development of the port is among Kenya's highest priorities. Approximately 7.5 million tons of waterborne commerce was handled at Mombasa in 1980, surpassing the previous five-year average of about 6 million tons per year. Import tonnages of petroleum have dominated the trade statistics. Another significant trend has been the rapid development of containerized cargo and container handling equipment at the port.

Kenya has been a politically stable country and has an open door policy toward foreign investment. Significant funds have been made available to Kenya as donor countries recognize the relatively stable

political and economic environment. U.S. officials believe that the port of Mombasa must continue to be developed in order to simulate economic recovery of East Africa.

The U.S. Government is helping Kenya develop the port of Mombasa and related facilities such as nearby Mai Airport. The harbor project is being done by an American dredging contractor, Great Lakes Dredge and Dock of Illinois. The $33.4 million project, to be completed by December 1982, will provide a 45-foot deep, 1000-foot channel past the entrance to the harbor and create a 1,500-foot radius turning basin in the harbor. The Kilindini Harbor improvements will be large enough to permit aircraft carriers to enter water areas protected from the open sea. Currently the carriers must moor three to five miles outside of the harbor. Small boat traffic between the ship and the harbor has at times been hazardous and unpredictable under certain weather conditions.

The United States is also helping the Kenyans expand the facilities at Mai Airport, Mombasa. The work is being done by a Kenyan firm from Nairobi. The estimated $5 million project includes extension of aircraft taxiways and a larger aircraft parking apron and air cargo terminal.

Other U.S.-sponsored projects worth approximately $2.4 million are planned for improvements to the Kenya Naval Base in the inner harbor.

Mombasa is one of the few ports on the Indian Ocean littoral with both the facilities and political will to welcome U.S. sailors. In 1980, there were 40 visits to Mombasa by U.S. naval vessels. In 1981, there were 28 visits, and through April 1982 there were 20 ships that have called on Mombasa for liberty and resupply.

Sailors visit the tourist attractions of the coast and many tour Kenya's magnificent game parks. The American Ambassador reported that the sailors are treated well and have been notable for their good conduct. In addition, services to the fleet such as supplies, water, garbage services and fuel mount up to a considerable tally of official expenditures in Mombasa. At the time of the delegation's visit, it was estimated that so far in 1982, ships and ship's companies have spent about $5 million in Kenya. Considerably more expenditures are expected during the remainder of this year.

The sale of pyrethrum for U.S. stockpiles of strategic materials was also discussed with the Kenyans. Pyrethrum is an insecticide derived from natural plant sources and is abundantly available in Kenya. Kenya has a surplus of the material and would like the United States to buy about $30 million worth for the U.S. stockpile. There is no pyrethrum in the stockpile at present. However, the United States has the technology to produce a synthetic insecticide similar to pyrethrum with characteristics for a long storage life. The shelf life of natural pyrethrum is relatively low and consequently not ideally suited for stockpiling. The Kenyans understand American reluctance to buy natural pyrethrum, but would like the United States to keep this trade option under consideration.

American officials described Kenya's political and social environment as stable with good race relations with whites and Asians in Kenya. They portrayed the Kenyan legal system as good, independent and judicially fair, and parliamentarians for the most part as conscientious advocates of their constituencies.

U.S. participation in the Kenyan economy is growing. Currently there are 150 to 175 American companies headquartered there. The largest U.S. Peace Corps operations in the world is in Kenya. In addition, U.S. tourism in Kenya is on the rise.

VIII. MAURITIUS

The present Mauritius government represents the only voice among major island nations in the Indian Ocean that supports the American military presence on Diego Garcia.

Transformation of the 7,000-acre atoll of Diego Garcia into an American military staging base in the Indian Ocean has provoked contrasting reactions between Mauritius and her nearby neighbors.

While the leftist governments of Madagascar and the Seychelles oppose U.S. military use of Diego Garcia, Prime Minister Seewoosagur Ramgoolam of Mauritius believes the American presence on Diego Garcia is justified to counter what he describes as the Soviet Union's "big effort to destabilize the Indian Ocean region."

Meeting With Prime Minister and Cabinet

Dr. Ramgoolam stressed in an hour-long meeting with the delegation that Mauritius, like other nations in and on the rim of the Indian Ocean basin, would prefer to see the huge ocean area as a zone of peace "but for now we welcome the U.S. presence to discourage Soviet adventurism in the area."

Pointing out that Mauritius is one of the few democratic nations in the Third World, the prime minister challenged the United States to take a greater interest in countries like Mauritius and to do so before there are threats to democracies in that part of the world.

There is a general election scheduled on June 11, 1982. Dr. Ramgoolam's Labor Party faces strong Marxist party opposition which the prime minister said is heavily financed by Libya and the Soviet Union. Dr. Ramgoolam's party has been in power since Mauritius gained independence from Great Britain in 1968.

Mauritius' 17 percent unemployment rate and apprehension over whether it can sell off a bumper crop of sugar—its major cash crop—are the two biggest concerns of the Mauritian government and the island's one million people. Sugar dominates the Mauritian economy with 90 percent of the country's cultivable land planted in the crop. Sugar exports provide about 65 percent of the country's foreign earnings.

In efforts to reduce the island's jobless rate, the Ramgoolam government recently received approval of $2 million in U.S. economic aid to establish a food-for-work program that could employ about 8,000 persons within several months. The Mauritian government also has assisted a Mauritian building subcontractor to participate in the U.S. naval construction program on Diego Garcia, resulting in about 300 Mauritians taking new jobs there.

U.S. Naval Ship Visits

Mauritius, which grows a variety of vegetables and fruits, also has encouraged the U.S. Navy to purchase more of this produce in re-

supplying its ships on patrol in the Indian Ocean. In the past two years there has been a sizable increase in the number of U.S. naval ships calling on Mauritius for periodic rest and replenishment. Because access to ports is important to the U.S. fleet's operation in that vast area of the world, the delegation is concerned that an ouster of the Ramgoolam government by a Marxist political party would probably result in the closing of Mauritian ports to the U.S. Navy.

Mauritius, while non-aligned, was described by Dr. Ramgoolam as a "friend of the West." This friendship was reflected in the very warm reception afforded the delegation by the prime minister and his cabinet. In welcoming the group, Dr. Ramgoolam noted that this was the first congressional delegation to visit Mauritius since it became an independent nation in 1968.

IX. SOUTH AFRICA

The delegation visited Capetown, South Africa on April 17 and 18. This was the second visit of a House Armed Services Committee delegation in a two-year period. The earlier visit is covered in a committee report entitled "Report of the Delegation to Africa," 96th Congress, 1st session, No. 17, dated March 4, 1980.

Background

The Republic of South Africa occupies the southern most portion of Africa. From the standpoint of both resources and geographical location it is very important to world security. It is a large country with an area twice that of Texas. It has a coastline of 2,700 miles. It is highly developed industrially. It has extensive resources of coal and uranium for use as energy fuels and major deposits such as cobalt, chromium, manganese and vanadium and most other minerals that are critical to the production of weapons systems.

South Africa is located at a critical point in the transportation route of Persian Gulf oils to NATO nations. The difficult sea passage routes around the Cape of Good Hope would make it an ideal region for an aggressor to interdict sea lanes.

South Africa has excellent and strategically located military bases such as the Simonstown naval base. The state of development of its industrial sector could be the base for helping other African nations develop modern industrial capability. In light of these and related factors, the delegation was desirous of obtaining updated information on developments in the region and communicating with government leaders in the country.

National security matters

Upon arrival at the D. F. Malan Airport in Capetown the delegation was met by South African military officials. Military intelligence data on the region of Africa, some of which was classified, was presented. The delegation was also provided with documentation of classified material which is being maintained in the committee's files.

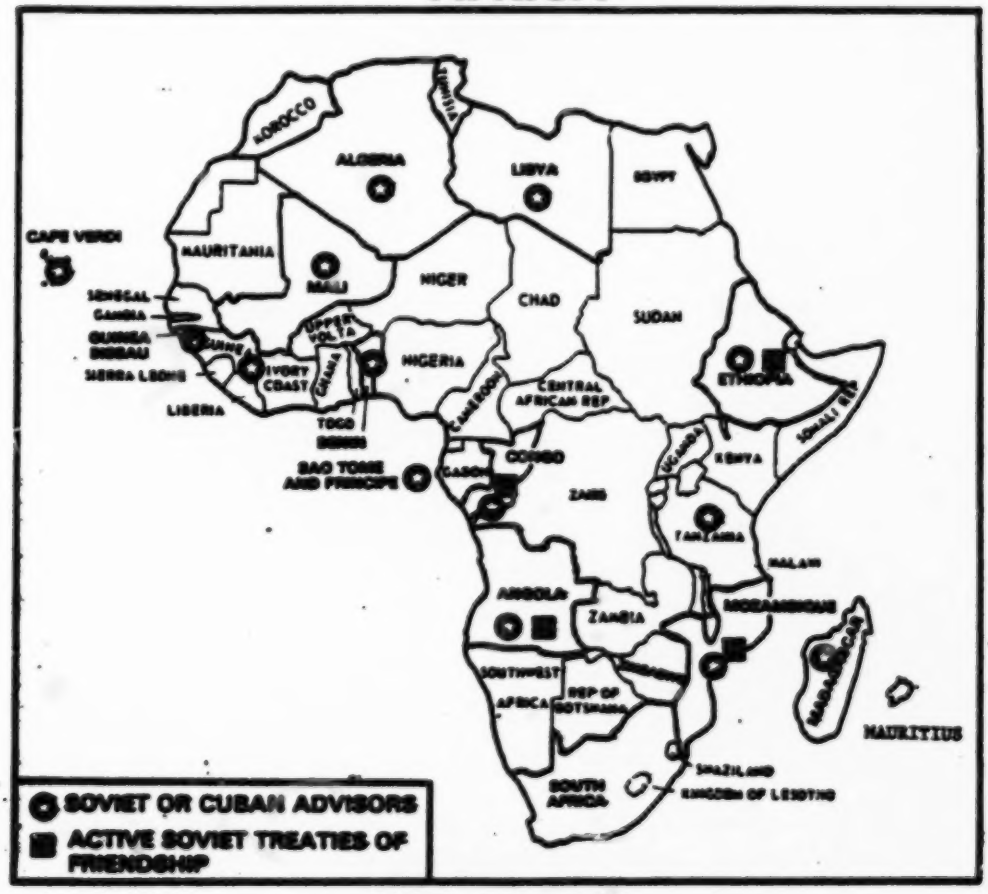
The data presented underscore the major efforts by the Soviet Union to gain access and influence in the region. It was explained that the Soviet Union is assuming a "low profile" in projecting its military and political influence in the area, using surrogate forces such as Cubans in Angola and supplying terrorists with military equipment.

The sale of Soviet military equipment to some nations of Africa has depleted the very limited financial resources of these nations and terrorist activities and civil wars are further destroying their weak economies. It was stated that "the nations of Africa are going broke." The importance of assisting such nations to help them maintain a semblance of solvency for the health and welfare of their citizens was stressed.

Naval base facilities

The modern naval facilities at Simonstown, which the previous committee delegation visited, were recapped. The major ship repair facilities at Durban and Capetown were described, and it was stated that all of these facilities are available for use by United States forces. The failure to accept this offer to use these facilities imposed significant restrictions on United States military operations in the region, according to the South African officials. The South African representatives emphasized the strategic position South Africa occupies relative to the control of the Indian Ocean and South Atlantic regions. The importance of facilities to support aircraft and ship patrols in the region and the use of the sophisticated communication centers in South Africa for the monitoring of ship movements in the Indian Ocean and South Atlantic to facilitate western nation control in the area were repeatedly stressed.

AFRICA



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South-West Africa

The Foreign Affairs and Defense Ministry representatives devoted a considerable amount of time to explaining South Africa's side of the efforts to reach a solution on the Government of South-West Africa or Namibia. This included the various proposals for setting up a constitutional government in Namibia, the importance of settling the issue without further delay, and the dire economic situation in South-West Africa that was worsening because of lack of settlement of the governing issue.

Great interest was expressed in working with the United States on the solution of the South-West Africa problem. Because of the delegation's brief visit and primary focus on the RDJTF it was not possible to go into great detail on the respective positions of all of the parties involved with the issue.

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